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Mesa's top officials were in a celebratory and congratulatory mood Monday night, and they had some heavy-hitting company to share the festivities.

U.S. Rep. [Harry Mitchell](#), D-Ariz., whose district includes Mesa west of Country Club Drive, was invited to council chambers so Mayor Scott Smith and the rest of the council could thank him for his work in Washington on behalf of the city.

Mitchell's efforts have included tireless advocacy for Phoenix-Mesa Gateway [Airport](#), resulting most recently in a \$9 million federal grant to expand the terminal. He also was cited for boosting Mesa's efforts to extend light rail into its downtown area.

Smith called Mitchell "a true friend of Mesa," and also thanked the congressman personally for mentoring him during his first year in office. Mitchell was a longtime mayor of Tempe before moving into the [state Legislature](#) and then Congress.

The council next congratulated numerous staffers who helped Mesa hit the jackpot with grants from the federal stimulus program. Whereas many cities got only part or none of the money they sought, Mesa received all it asked so it could hire 25 new [police officers](#) and build two fire stations.

Finally, Planning Director John Wesley showed off a snazzy and very large trophy the city received last week from a statewide planning association. The award honored Mesa for its planning efforts along West Main Street and in the Gateway area.

Once the council got down to actual business Monday, it took about five minutes to read and approve all the agenda items, open and close an annexation hearing, and adjourn the meeting. Going by the Monday-night football clock, it wasn't even halftime yet.